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 THE VICE-PRESIDENT'S SON

THE
VICE-PRESIDENT'S
SON

by
DAN SYTTON



The Canterbury Press
Chicago

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The Little Son on the Beach.

Author's Note

ONE dark and stormy night the door of our little publicity office opened abruptly and in walked a jaunty piece of humanity of the male variety. He was smoking a lilac-scented cigarette and swung a cane. He introduced himself. We shall call him Dan Sytton.

We had worked that evening for several hours and with our little office girl, Maisie, were about to leave for the night. But when Dan Sytton placed himself, importantly, in the big easy chair before the still glowing grate fire and stated his mission, we seated ourselves. The young man began by telling us he wished us to write a story for him to be used in the movies. A startling love story . . . his own, in fact.

Having been reporters in our day, we instinctively reached for pads and pencils and took down the "story" as he told it. He referred often to a mauve diary which he took from his overcoat pocket.

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With his mask on, Dan Sytton might have passed as an attractive man. But we saw him with the mask off. His frustrated hopes for a life of luxury showed all too plainly in his face, as in a voice that became at length ranting, he told a story that we at once recognized as being that also of a well known young woman, whom we shall call Imogene Gunn.

Dan Sytton was blonde of hair. His head inclined to the contour, commonly known as "peanut shaped." His ears were a bit floppy and quite large. His eyes were blue and cold. He was of medium height. As a whole he wasn't bad to look at, but even so, little Maisie always after that referred to the young man as, "that awful sap."

As the "story" unfolded, we were forcibly reminded of an old man we know, who, whenever he hears someone telling some scandalous tale about his neighbor, shakes his head and says, "Well, it all depends on HOW it's told."

For we knew Imogene Gunn—knew her for a great hearted, kindly woman—a

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woman who had not in all her life been known to do an unkind deed. We knew that had she told the story, it would have been one of beauty. She would have remembered the big, fine moments of her friendship with this young man. She would have interpreted that friendship in terms of loveliness. Being of a great nature herself, she, no doubt, could not sense the pettiness in other natures. That fact alone could explain her interest in a person such as the young man before the fire was revealing himself to be. Too, Dan Sytton was, no doubt, considerably the actor and Miss Gunn probably never saw him as we did, thwarted in his life's ambition to lead a life of luxury without any effort on his part.

His heterologous tale ended, Dan flipped the mauve diary into the fire and watched it go up in smoke.

"So went my comfort," he said. Then he strutted out into the night.

We wrote the story for the movies . . . if we hadn't, someone else would have done

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so. We have also written it up verbatim. What follows is just as he gave it to us.

What—from Imogene Gunn would have been a story of human frailty, fraught with tenderness and sacrifice—became through Dan Sytton's telling, nothing but pure asinity. That is what happens, always, when people of his ilk spread their “love stories” before the public.

“It all depends on HOW it's told.”



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CHAPTER I.

I WAS born in a cyclone cellar in the sand hills of a state I shall call Kansas, sometime in December, B. C. (before cigarettes). I was attired in very becoming clothing of white nainsook, hand-hemstitched flour-sack didies, pink knitted bootees and a pale, blue flannel coat over which was draped my mother's new "Kiss Me Quick," a variety of shawl prevalent in those days. I had milk for dinner that night and dear old grandaunt, Geraldine Sytton, left thirty cents in my little CASHmere stocking.

My father, a junkman, was learning at that time, under the tutelage of his uncle,

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the high points of becoming an antique dealer. My mother was an extraordinarily fine cook and did amusing things with corn. In addition, she made such products as corn bread, corn pone, hominy, etc.

I was still subject to incipient attacks of colic and my older brother, Constant Sytton, was large enough to help mother handle corn and broil jack rabbit steaks when we moved to a city I shall call Hutchinson.

Insomuch as this book is much concerned with Imogene Gunn and me, the relations between our families, which very early were matters of neighborhood conjecture, had best be disclosed at once.

While Pa was learning to manufacture authentic looking wormholes in green cottonwood chairs, Imogene Gunn was already lecturing her high school classmates on reform measures and various phases of the Cause. My father always spoke of Miss Gunn most heatedly and later voted a straight Populist ticket. The Gunns, with the exception of one of the boys named Sylvester, were all Prohibitionists. It was



The Author with his favorite beverage - - - at that age

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this, perhaps, coupled with the fact that Miss Gunn's mother collected antiques, which served to develop the mutual feeling existing between our two families in those days.

There were numerous sets of Gunn children. In fact, as old Jake Jenks so well and so often said, "Them there Gunns are sure enough repeaters." There was one boy, Hebidiah, much older than any of the others; then there were Breckenridge and Catalina Gunn; then Imogene and her brother, Sylvester, and finally the youngest girl, Veroka Gunn.

My father had a younger brother by the name of Jabez Sytton, and he and Breckenridge Gunn were on fairly friendly terms until Jabez married the local church choir soprano and Breckenridge married the alto, after which all communications ceased.

This was about the time I smoked my first bootleg cigarette and thereupon wrote, while in the throes of agony, one of the best things to which I have ever been inspired.

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As I remember it, it commenced something like this:

“Dear rendezvous of youth! It haunts
me yet.

I shall not know its lovely like again.
’Twas there I first inhaled a cigarette,
And learned the meaning of ‘exquisite
pain.’ ”

Soon afterward, I began taking boxing lessons of Hebidiah Gunn and came to adore him. Boxing, in fact, became my favorite study.

The following year was a record breaker in my life. Kansas was torn by woman’s rights pleas, temperance lecturers and reformers. It was, in fact, torn to such an extent that it has ever since been referred to as “Bleeding Kansas.” And the sister of my much loved boxing instructor was taking the stump for the Cause. I have often tried to recall when I became aware of this. Whether I had come to know there was an Imogene Gunn through her gesticulations on the street corners; whether I had heard



The Author at the age of one.

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her mentioned by Hebidiah Gunn upon coming out of one of the frequent dazes into which he put me with a swift uppercut to the jaw; whether her mother mentioned her stumping proclivities during one of her frequent sessions with my father, at which times he tried to convince her that the half dozen chairs he had received two days before from Kansas City were fanback Windsors dating somewhere around 1800, or whether Sylvester Gunn (the only one of the family, you will recall, who did not vote the Prohibitionist ticket) came to our house on business with my mother, and casually mentioned the fact, I do not know.



CHAPTER II.

IF, however, I had ever foolishly sympathized with my mother's activities in the field of corn, I at once withdrew and vowed that when I was of age, I would vote a straight Prohibition ticket.

It must have kept me working those days to remain in anything like the necessary condition to withstand Hebidiah Gunn's lessons and be at the same time the self-appointed guardian of Miss Gunn's name, which was bound to be sullied in those stirring days of the fight for the Cause by street loafers and livery barn loungers.

The die was cast; I was in love with Imogene Gunn, and this, notwithstanding the fact that she had married a man who later became an aviator—a rather boring fellow, I thought. However, I was able to borrow several dollars from him at divers times.

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Miss Gunn, along with her belief in reforms, held to the then somewhat new theory that married women should retain their maiden names, and this she proceeded to do. It was a marvelous idea, I thought.

Regardless of the fact that Miss Gunn's husband, who later became an aviator, was even at that time quite a high flyer, he was extremely jealous of Miss Gunn and was never very kindly disposed toward me, mere child that I was, when Pa and I came around collecting junk.

My father tried to kill my love for Imogene by calling attention to the fact that she liked cracker jack. He would come home with a load of junk and say, "I saw Miss Gunn eating cracker jack at the corner of Fifth and Main this afternoon," but neither the repetition of such statements nor the disgusted expression my father affected, disturbed me in the least. I think Miss Gunn must have given up this habit later because in the years that followed, I never saw her use corn in any form save

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fried mush, hot tamales and one other instance.

So that my feeling for Miss Gunn might not be too apparent, I decided to affect a fondness for the future aviator. He was not the kind of person I in the least admired, but I did my best. It was during this brief period, in fact, that I borrowed the monies of him hereinbefore mentioned.

Sometimes I would call Miss Gunn's residence on the telephone and if the hired man or the future aviator answered, would say, "This is Constant Sytton; is there any junk for Pa today?" If Miss Gunn answered, that was, as Kipling says, "another story."

I had the number of Miss Gunn's car by heart; likewise the future aviator's number and could spot them both a mile away. One time I remember in particular when Pa and I stopped at Miss Gunn's residence with a load of junk, the future aviator insisted upon examining some of our goods, but our dog, which was known the sand hills over



Cracker Jack had become a habit

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as "the Sytton Bull", got hold of his trousers and did away with the better part of them. Thereafter, the future aviator kept his suspicions to himself.



CHAPTER III.

HERE was in the town of Hutchinson an extremely handsome and a high-stepping man whose name, let us say, was Mr. Percival Burr. Scandal mongers said that Mr. Burr and Imogene Gunn were very neighborly neighbors and asked how the future aviator could be blind to their "carryings on." These reports came to me from the other boys in Hebidiah Gunn's boxing classes, whose parents evidently discussed such things before the very ears of their innocent and helpless babes. My father and mother never discussed such things; that I know. They were usually too busy settling their own difficulties. But this gossip concerning Hutchinson's leader of the Vice Crusade and one of Hutchinson's handsomest men did not cause me any uneasiness. Instead, I could quite understand the situation and anyway I was quite sure there could never be anything between



"A very handsome and high-stepping man"—

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Miss Gunn and anyone else excepting the purest of platonic comradeship. And wasn't it very probable too that he felt his very spine turn to jelly at the sound of her voice?

About my only regrets were that I was not the master of a riding school as he was; that I had never been to Kansas City and that I was not in society, never having been asked to any of the parties which usually wound up with the combined crowd singing "The Buffalo Girls Are Coming Out Tonight."

Mr. Burr had a son, Heathcoat, I shall call him, about my own age, with halitosis and fallen arches, who knew everything a wise father could tell him. And it was he who earned my chief dislike. I never by hook or crook could borrow any money from that boy.

Frequently, the Gunn Lizzie would ramble past on its way to the sand hills. Once there was in the car Miss Gunn, Miss Gunn's husband, Mr. Burr, Mr. Burr's housekeeper, his son, Heathcoat, Miss

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Gunn's hired man and three of Miss Gunn's dogs. I was sitting on a pile of junk in the front yard as they went past and Miss Gunn smiled at me while the aviator made a gesture toward me behind her back of which only little boys and ill bred men are capable. How I envied Heathcoat; I would commune with the junk till all hours of the night those times waiting for the Gunn Lizzie to return laden with sand hill plums which Miss Gunn converted into jam and jelly. She was a very domesticated person and never neglected her home duties even for the Cause. She loved cooking almost as much as she loved eating and it was my pleasure many times when I came to know her better to spend happy hours with her concocting new and delicious recipes, which we usually tried out with success.

Heathcoat Burr, knowing of my crush on Miss Gunn, stopped my brother, Constant, on the street one day and told him to "tell Dan" that his heroine had been out to his father's riding academy and ridden sway-

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backed one of his best mounts. The truth of it was that it was probably an old nag on its last legs anyway.



CHAPTER IV.

WHEN my little sister was born at the beginning of the grasshopper season, there was dissension as to what she should be called. I, of course, announced that she would be named Imogene, but others of our friends and relatives favored the name Geraldine for our dear old Grandauant Sytton, and my arguments availed me nothing. I was much put out by my unexpected defeat, but with my usual characteristic brilliance, I detected at a later date that Geraldine would never have carried such a proud name to glory anyway and so it was that I turned defeat into success.

Before Pa bought the Twenty-Mule Team Truck which he afterward used on his “junkets” as I cleverly called them, we often borrowed the neighbors’ donkeys and



We often borrowed the neighbor's donkey—

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with the burros braying at intervals. I still have a very good mental picture of one afternoon, and of my brother, Constant, in particular. He sat erect on the burro which set off on a ramble throught the countryside necessitated his dragging his feet in the sand, and we were both barefooted, but he wore gloves—buckskin gauntlets—and an old plug hat of father's. His chest was heavy with election candidate buttons. He had managed to sneak out past Ma in his Sunday best, which was really Pa's wed-ding suit cut down to fit him. How insignificant I was in shrunken overalls and a stocking cap. When we passed the Gunn residence, I noted my adored one sitting on the porch. Dared I tell Constant all? Dared I suggest that we stop? No. Better let my youthful heart be broken than murmur against my fate.

As we passed, Miss Gunn trilled at us and the future aviator gave me his customary dirty look. My heart turned over twice and I felt queer in the region where my Adam's apple would some day be. I came to con-

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sciousness three miles later and Constant said, as though suddenly inspired, "Let's call on the Gunns," which we did with as little delay as possible.

I was so overcome to be sitting along side my adored one that I never opened my mouth but once and that when my donkey started braying and I had to bray in reply to quiet him as his mate ignored him.

Constant and Miss Gunn's husband carried on a quite spirited conversation, however, relative to junk, the price of wheat, etc. As we were leaving, Constant said, "You know, Miss Gunn, Dan is 'nutty' about you." This, of course, made clear my condition to Miss Gunn, but further antagonized the aviator.

Shortly after this, Miss Gunn, while talking to my father, said, "It may be I can find a position for Dan," and a bit subsequent to that, I was hired by her to do odd jobs around the estate, help the hired man and so on.

Prior to this, though, one night before the

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moon was up, I was scurrying along down the trail to Hebidiah Gunn's house with a pail of—er—hominy mother had asked me to carry for her. Through the intimate darkness, my eyes were fixed on the sand-burs along the road and occasionally toad-stools reared their pathetic heads and seemed to ask to be taken home and cooked.

I had just stooped to gather a particularly tempting looking one when I sensed Imogene Gunn coming. It was too late to go back so I walked bravely toward her through the darkness, one hand full of—er—hominy and the other full of toadstools. Even in the intimate darkness she seemed to recognize me and smiled. Years later I wrote a poem which was inspired by the above incident and that very poem received the regular semi-annual Bile award for the best contribution to attenuated poetry of the year. (Also years later when Imogene Gunn made her first trip to Osawattomie in my behalf, she asked if I remembered the incident and in her familiar way told me

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that her liking for—er-er-hominy dated from that moment. What a wonderful memory to carry in one's heart down through the fleeting years.)



CHAPTER V.

AT THIS momentous time in my life, I analyzed my emotions as best I could. What a mass of them! I knew I thought more of Imogene Gunn almost than of myself. Up until this time, however, I had remained in complete ignorance of many things most youth of my age knew. I had never, as most youngsters have, I dare say, had a solitary talk with my parents regarding these matters that every young person should know. I told Miss Gunn as much and she said, "Inquire of me, Dan, regarding anything you want to know and I will tell you."

So then I asked her all of a dozen questions, I guess, one of them being how in the name of common sense we happened to have navels.

She glanced at me calmly and beautifully and then by way of illustrating her explana-

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tion, said to me, "I shall begin with the old, old explanation, Dan. Now take an egg—"

I felt very grave and reverent and a tiny bit flushed withal, for it was unusual, I felt, to be introduced to this most marvelous of mysteries by the woman one loved.

"Take an egg," Miss Gunn began again. I wanted her to continue and yet I didn't. It was all too wonderful. I was becoming quite agitated. I experienced wonderful thrills from just having her glance upon me. I knew that she would tell me everything now; that I would be initiated into the most wonderful mystery it is possible for one just coming into manhood to know, and I was a bit sorrowful, but almost wholly impatient for it. Still and all, I would never again be the innocent boy I had remained up until this time.

"Take several eggs," began Miss Gunn for the third and last time, and then she revealed all to me, "and by the simple addition of a bit of ice water to them while beating, you can make the very lightest omelette obtainable."

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Thus was made clear to me the greatest mystery of humankind, i. e., the secret of making a light and fluffy omelette that will not fall.

Then in explaining to me about navels, she said, "That, Dan, is another one of the many wonderful things Mr. Burbank perfected. By some hook or crook, he succeeded in absolutely abolishing the seeds in the common variety of orange, and giving us the perfect navels we have today."

I recall that we had applesauce for dinner that night.

CHAPTER VI.

IN THE employ of Miss Gunn, I continued doing with characteristic thoroughness such odd jobs as fell to my lot, though they were usually of the most menial kind, in order that I might remain near her.

I was at this period, though afflicted with the pimples common to adolescence, conceded to be a remarkably attractive lad, and I often wondered if Miss Gunn noticed this. My dear one's fondness for animals extended to a large stable of riding horses where I spent most of my leisure time writing sonnets to her and where I think I may safely say I composed some of the finest poetry for which I have ever had inspiration.

By degrees I came to do a great deal of the work about the barn which was a rambling old fashioned affair with a great hay-

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mow. In from her daily canter, Imogene often stopped and talked to me, commenting kindly upon my care and diligence and expressing herself as being thoroughly satisfied with conditions.

I never shall forget the cold winter afternoon when she came into the stables after her customary ride. I remember vividly that I was wearing a new pair of striped denim overalls for which I had paid two dollars and a quarter, and a dark blue cap which set off to perfection the unusual azure of my extraordinarily large eyes.

I walked about with Imogene as she inspected the stalls and my delight at being in her presence was such that I was not conscious until somewhat later that her favorite mount had bitten me as I bent over on one occasion to fasten her puttees which had somehow become loosened.

Then we ascended to the great haymow as Imogene never allowed anything fed to her horses that she had not personally okehed. The mow was fragrant with hay

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and vitally warm from the heat of the animals beneath. Miss Gunn seemed to forget the worries her career imposed upon her, and sitting there with the fragrance of the hay about her, she told me much of herself. The hay, which we did not disturb, was piled high about us. Then she complimented me upon my unusual ability to handle horses.

I became Miss Gunn's groom—as she called me—on that day.

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A great commotion on the stairway leading to the mow startled us and a gruff voice shouted, "Come out o' that, we've got the goods on you. You're under arrest," and other remarks which were totally uncalled for, I thought. Miss Gunn seemed stunned and the men started questioning me. Then my darling pulled herself together and said, "Let the poor boy alone. I'm responsible for anything which happens on this estate. What is the charge?"

"Miss Gunn . . . Miss Gunn, a long dis-

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tance call for you," someone shouted in the distance.

"Miss Gunn?" whispered the now strangely respectful deputy.

"Miss Gunn? Why we're in the wrong haymow. Jake Jenks' place is the one we want. Jake's a bootlegger and we're huntin' his still."

Always after that when Miss Gunn and I wished to discuss anything, we went into the bridle room. There was a lock on the door leading into it.

Miss Gunn put thirty dollars into my sock that night—it being Christmas Eve—and I remember we had pickled pigs feet and sauer kraut for dinner the first time that season.

A few weeks later Miss Gunn came upon me surreptitiously writing sonnets to her in the cowshed and decided that my talents were such as to make me worthy of added responsibilities. So I became her secretary, as she so endearingly called me, which made it necessary, of course, for me to accompany her on some of her speaking tours.

CHAPTER VII.

DY BON BON, as I came to call Miss Gunn, she being usually so very sweet, was quite an epicure in her own way. I shall never forget that first time I had breakfast with her. It was some time after my promotion . . . winter time. Her husband was still aviating around, and Miss Gunn, being of a gregarious nature, felt the need of my presence at breakfast. I recall sharing such meals with her often after that, she outlining then our plans for the day—this being while I was still personally employed by Miss Gunn.

This particular morning she ate with great relish, a large bowl of peaches and cream, a great dish of oatmeal, sausages and creamed potatoes, toast and rolls and what I thought most queer, a biting cheese, called “fadt ost,” which I must admit, did not have the fragrance of roses.

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My Bon Bon was quite a coffee fiend. She was apt to take a swig at any hour of the day or night. She had a way of arranging her mouth so as to get the fullest possible rapture from her coffee when she drank it. She would put a lump of sugar in her mouth and then draw the coffee through it. Sometimes there would be a soft s-s-s-s-sp sound, as the liquid went through the sugar. I have never heard of, read of or seen anyone else do this. She was just as individual in other things.

I recall Miss Gunn's coffee cup was filled many times that morning by a maid who was quite a slick looker, I must admit, and who had, on several occasions, tried her wiles on me. I noted her beauty faded, however, when in the presence of my dear Imogene Gunn. There were such high lights in Miss Gunn's hair!

And I shall long remember how my Bon Bon used to cock her adorable head to one side and say, with a coaxing, teasing smile,

“Will you have some ‘fadt ost’ with me this morning, Kiddy?”

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That was before the momentous day when she started to call me Dan. I, of course, always called her Miss Gunn to her face.

I suppose my Bon Bon needed all this food to keep up the extraordinary vitality which was hers. Surely, she had more than any other person I have ever known. I often wished I could eat as much as she, but it seemed I hadn't the room for it. When, on occasions I did eat the "ost"—just to please my beloved—I remember I used a strong mouth wash as soon after as I could.

The next Christmas Eve, as I remember, my Bon Bon and I had dinner together—the husband of Imogene Gunn still being an aviator. The table fairly groaned with things my Bon Bon liked to eat at Christmas time. Off to one side stood a small table with a bowl of steaming liquid in which a ham had been boiled. Miss Gunn taught me the trick of gedunking a slice of bread into the liquid and transferring it deftly to my plate. As I well remember, Miss Gunn taught me many little tricks that winter.

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This particular one she called "dope i grotten."

On the candle lit table were meats of all kinds, fruits, a decanter of spiced liquor, and a rice pudding in which was hidden an almond. Miss Gunn explained that whoever got the almond was assured of happiness the coming year. I saw to it that my Bon Bon got the almond. Her happiness meant a great deal to my comfort.

There was a dish, as I recall, which I found it hard to stomach, though I did, for I could see it might hurt Miss Gunn, should I appear not to relish the dank looking lute-fisk which she ate with seeming great pleasure. At this dinner Miss Gunn told me for the first time that she was descended from the Vikings who came over with Lief Ericsen, and that her forebears had come to Kansas in early days, as vice crusaders. Strange, I hadn't guessed this before, for in moments of great emotion or pleasurable excitement, my Bon Bon might say,

"Kjiss" or "Yealous" or perhaps "Pea-

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yamas." She came also to call me "Kjerie"—that being Viking for "Dearie."

I have often thought Miss Gunn lapsed into accented speech at times to put me at my ease. I had not had the advantages which she had had and I did sometimes feel shy in her presence.

That night was the only time I have seen Miss Gunn under the influence of any liquid stronger than coffee. She had taken more of the spiced drink than she realized, and as it does its work several hours after drinking, the storm broke at the poker party to which we went after our dinner . . . I going ostensibly in the capacity of her secretary.

How beautiful my Bon Bon looked that evening. I recall remarking about her seeming unusual slenderness. She confided in me, in a nonchalant way which was really chummy, that she no longer wore starched corset covers to evening affairs, which probably accounted for her slender appearance.

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When the full force of the spiced drink struck her, my Bon Bon became hilarious and lost fast. This began to disturb me. There were many things I needed and I did not wish my darling to lose everything. So, thinking of her comfort, I said,

“Miss Gunn, perhaps you should go home now and finish that report which must be out by the New Year.”

“Miss Gunn?” she queried shakily. I think she wished I had called her Imogene, at least that’s what I thought. Then she went on,

“Ima—Ima—Ima Mogene Gunn’s gotta make a report!” She sang it out, rather giddily, I thought, for a vice crusader. Finally I got her home.

I recall I wore a tuxedo for the first time that evening and a new pair of B. V. D.s, which I found uncommonly comfortable.

That was the year Miss Gunn got a car for my use. I recall she called it, adorably, “The Kiddy Car.” The next morning I found thirty silver dollars tucked down in

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my purple sock, which I had hung in my innocence, at the foot of the bed.

That was the beginning of a year of such happiness and affluence as I had never dreamed of. I had much time for writing poetry. All my poems were, of course, to my Bon Bon. One covered fifty pages. We agreed that never before, except perhaps, in Persian, had such poems ever been written. That year I came to man's estate.



CHAPTER VIII.

HERE was never anyone more loyal to her cause than my darling. I recall one trip she made to the east. She dreaded to go.

“Kiddy, I must not fail my cause,” she said, wistfully, “But I’d rather stay right here.”

She went, however, and her adoring Kiddy went with her. There were so many things a man could do for her on such trips and her husband being an aviator and all—it fell to my pleasurable lot to do them. She was truly a grateful vice crusader, too.

I knew I wouldn’t see much of my Bon Bon, once the speech was over. Her hostesses would pounce upon her and that would be the last I’d see of her that trip. But I could be with her and watch over her until then.

I got quite an extensive wardrobe before

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leaving for the east — a violet dressing gown, trimmed in purple, a pair of rattan bedroom slippers, a new suit of a sort of violent navy blue, and a pair of tan and brown blucher cut shoes. I also provided myself with a lavender shirt and a mauve tie as well as a new pair of ashes of roses socks. I recall my Bon Bon called me, chummily, her study in purples when she first saw me in this get-up.

At this time I had just started using a certain kind of hair oil and as I looked in the mirror that morning before going to the train and saw the shining waves of my hair, I remember saying to myself,

“The glory that was grease!”

At times, I think I may be said to have been quite original.

Arrived in the city, we got into a cab. Miss Gunn said, “We want a discreet hotelry.” She was quite mid-Victorian in her speech at times.

The cab driver seemed to know his Bermudas. He took us to a place which I shall

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call the Hitz. Miss Gunn registered, I remember. I stood off admiring her. So stately, so beautiful, the focus of all eyes in that lobby. She was the slickest kind of a dresser. In fact she was known as the world's best dressed vice crusader.

A bell boy took her bags and one of mine. There was another bag that I would not trust to alien hands. I noticed a man watched us as we entered the elevator, rather impertinently, I thought. But somehow I always felt equal to any situation that might arise in the presence of Miss Gunn. I would guard her well.

We had adjoining rooms. Miss Gunn went to hers, I to mine. It wasn't long until I slipped into my Bon Bon's room with the precious bag. She awaited me eagerly. I heard her breath coming, in short pants. I opened the bag and tenderly took out the contents. There came a knock at the door. I tried to repack the bag but the intruders entered too soon. Six burly men and a bell hop. They were entirely too belligerent, I thought, under the circumstances.

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"I had a hunch there was some funny business about you two," said one of them, eyeing my bag. "You'll have to move on."

Poor little Cleopatra and Mark Antony yelped their fright and tried to climb back into the bag where they had been so safe and warm.

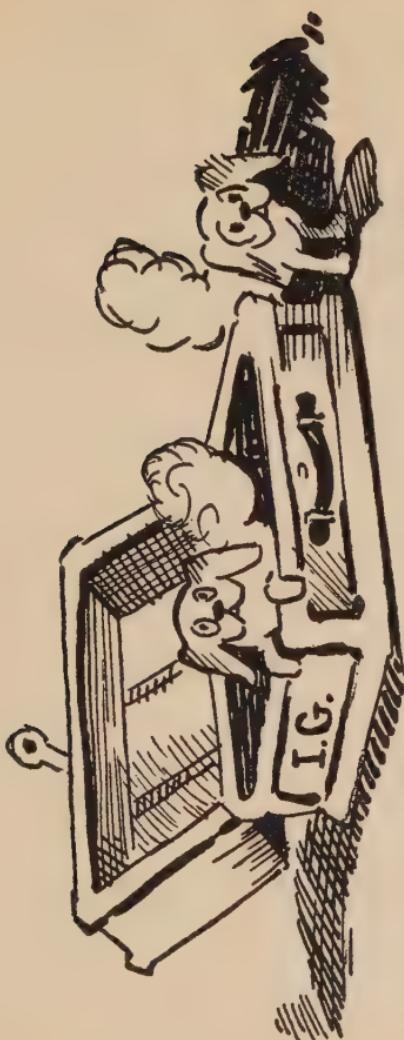
I offered to take the poor little things to a hotel more kindly disposed toward dogs and leave my darling there—but she said,

"If my dogs go, I go too. Cleopatra is ill. I wouldn't leave her at home and I won't be separated from her here."

How she did love and cherish dumb things! She carried the dogs in her arms as we went down.

We found another hotel over on Sixth Avenue. It wasn't at all fashionable—but we were never put out of it and the dogs were always treated with respect there.

This incident shows how Miss Gunn, as I said before, loved and cherished dumb things.



Cleopatra and Mark Anthony yelped their fright.

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Later that evening I remember finding a note pinned to my pyjamas.

"Remember, Dan, I trust you . . . to bring home the caraway seed for Mother." My brother, Constant Sytton, had written it. I got the caraway seed on my way to the hall where Miss Gunn was to speak. I have always assumed responsibility toward my family.

How my Bon Bon thrilled them that evening! And none was more thrilled than her adoring Kiddy, who sat quite near the front, drinking in the message his beloved gave forth in a voice rich and beautiful. I recall she said, in closing,

"The hand that rocks the cradle, is the hand that rules the world."

I remember Miss Gunn had had a sauerkraut juice cocktail just before dinner that evening. It seemed to make no difference in her speech.

The hostesses swooped down upon my Bon Bon immediately after the perform-

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ance—so I had to take Cleopatra and Mark Antony and go home. I recall Miss Gunn had given me a couple of hundred dollars with which to pay expenses. There was quite a good deal left over, so I bought myself a new purple and gold dressing gown and a mauve diary. I also bought a book called "Jurgen." As I remember, it was quite tame.

How well I recall my Bon Bon's homecoming after that speech. She brought me as a gift, a silver shaving mug—my very first.

The dogs barked rapturously. I almost wished I were one of them, so I too might show the joy I felt in her homecoming. I recall, I thought:

"What an adorable mother she would make."

I was quite overcome with emotion. When my eyes met my Bon Bon's there were tears in mine.

"Why the tears, Kjerie?"

"You'd make such a wonderful mother," I blurted out, unsteadily.

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How sweet my darling's smile, how sweet
her, "Would I, Kjerie, would I?"

Strange I did not understand the light
that came into her eyes on that memorable
occasion. I have often thought since that
Miss Gunn should have liked to adopt me.



CHAPTER IX.

SOMETIMES most amusing things happened to my Bon Bon and me. I recall once, when I had borrowed an acquaintance's hunting lodge for a week. It was 'way up in the north woods and I went there to rest for a while and write speeches for my dearest. She rarely ever used anything I wrote, but I liked composing things for her just the same. One evening she was there . . . she had come up to rehearse. Being far from the world and its cares, she could use her voice in its fullest volume and I recall she astounded me, not only with its timbre, but with the things she said. Her speech was for my ears alone at the moment when a knock came at the door. Imogene grabbed things and ran, hiding behind a great bear skin that hung on the far wall . . . reaching to the floor.

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A Mrs. Buleowski was at the door. I had visited at the Buleowski camp a few days before, it being about five miles away. That was before Miss Gunn came up. To see Mrs. Buleowski there astounded me. True, I had rolled my eyes at her when her husband's back was turned . . . but I most certainly had never given the woman to understand that I would countenance her visiting me alone . . . unannounced. Her great black eyes blinked ominously as I opened the door a wee bit.

"Where is your husband?" I asked—for effect and sparring for time.

She grinned knowingly as she said,
"He sleepa tight. Don' you worry 'bout
dat!"

I was astounded. I would never have believed it of the woman.

I told her firmly, as I held the door with my foot, that I was undressed and simply could not receive her. She coaxed for a while, but at last her heavy footsteps went down the path. I called after her,

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"My dear Mrs. Buleowski, don't you think you'd better take your husband along when you go walking in the dark after this?"

I thought this would set well with Miss Gunn. I am sure Mrs. Buleowski did not hear me for she received me with great friendliness at a later date, when Miss Gunn had gone to fill a speaking engagement.

I laughed heartily when I turned around, for in her haste to get behind the bear skin, Miss Gunn had left one of her silk stockings trailing over the front paw of the skin and a filmy bit of wearing apparel lay on the floor. I am sure if Mrs. Buleowski could have seen this latter, the dear soul would have been shocked, for as I later came to know, she herself wore them made of flour sacks.

Imogene laughed too, as she emerged from her hiding place and picking up her finery, went on mending it and "rehearsing."

A few days later, Miss Gunn's housekeeper and I called at the Buleowski camp and

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it was then I saw the aforementioned flour sack "things" hanging out on the line, it being wash day. Mrs. Buleowski greeted me most cordially.



CHAPTER X.

IF I had only been born earlier, Kid-dy," said my Bon Bon to me several weeks later. There was a note of longing in her voice and that engaging sweetness which she knew so well how to command, in spite of her inherited accent.

Miss Gunn had been at a convention in a city, which I shall call Des Moines. I had gone there to her with some important papers. We had left our hotel and had wandered out into the country. We had come to a small stream and were sitting among the bulrushes at the time. I wondered what was on my Bon Bon's mind. She cocked her adorable red head and said, rather wistfully, I thought, "Then I might have found you as Pharoah's daughter found Moses, among the bulrushes and had you for my very own with impunity."

Curious, so entranced were we that our boat was half full of water before we no-

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ticed it. We then shoved ashore and sat among the tall grasses, while my darling talked about her Cause and I listened. I recall we heard the nightingale sing and later Miss Gunn gathered a bunch of flowers which she called in her adorable fashion "Yonny Yump Ups."

On the way back we plucked some gum off a wild plum tree. I am not really given to such a bovine habit as chewing gum . . . but I did it to please my Bon Bon. I recall we walked along, holding hands, and my Bon Bon said, "Yust a couple of hicks, aren't we, Kiddy?"

I said, "May we go back and listen to the nightingales all night?"

"Perhaps, sometime, if it can be done becomingly," said Miss Gunn, smiling benignly. We were foolishly happy!

My Bon Bon made a side trip over to a small town, which I shall call Ames, later that evening, to make a speech for the Cause. She intended to take me with her, but when she was ready to go, I was down

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at the beauty parlor having my wave set, the afternoon among the bulrushes having been rather hard on it. Miss Gunn always greatly admired the wave in my blonde hair, even after she found out it was put there . . . not by Nature.

When Miss Gunn came back I was talking to a traveling salesman in the lobby. She went up to the rooms and checked out. When she came down and entered a hack, I rushed out and entered it as well. I have often wondered what that salesman thought when he saw me join a redheaded woman on such short notice. I guess he thought me rather much of a fast worker. I have also wondered just what the story was he started to tell me.

I shall never forget that ride to the station. I was so afraid the driver would hear my Bon Bon when she said, "You gonta sleep . . . with a hair net on tonight, Kjerie?" as she gently stroked my fresh wave.

God! how I loved to hear her say, "Kjerie!"

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That night on the train I experienced a new sensation. I was young and hadn't been around much and there were many things I did not know in those days. I can still feel how the thrills played tag up and down my backbone and my nerves tingled in a fashion foreign to them. I remember wondering if I would ever be the same again. Miss Gunn later told me that my naivete on this occasion endeared me to her more than ever.

You see, I hadn't really been taught much about music when I was a child. I remember once, when talking with Miss Gunn, she said,

“Dan, if you would know the heart of a nation, study its love songs.”

I must admit I did not quite understand her at the time. All I knew of love songs or any other songs, was what had been taught me by a boy at home, who later grew up into a novelist and wrote sex stories. He was older than I and used to draw pictures on fences and things, as well as write words which were not understood by poor little

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innocent me. He taught me, I recall, a love song called "Frankie and Johnnie." I remember wondering what they could have to do with the heart of a Nation. My Bon Bon later told me that the aforementioned song is no longer sung among the better class of people.

So—when I heard lovely band music that night on the train . . . if I remember correctly, it was the State Reformatory Band, on their way to fill an engagement . . . it was all new to me. Miss Gunn told me they were playing the love songs of our Nation. I understood then what she had been talking about before. I remember one selection which made my Bon Bon feel rather sad. It was, "Darling, I am Growing Old."

Ever since then, on hearing band music, I have had the same thrilled, uplifted feeling as I had that night on the Pullman car.

When we got into Marshalltown, early the next morning, my Bon Bon looked rather tired. I mentioned it to her.

I shall never forget that small city of Marshalltown. They were having "corn

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weather" when we were there. We stayed at either one of their hotels, I forgot to put the name down in my diary. When I was out walking at noon, I paused for a moment at the door of the city's tall building. Most of the doctors of the place have their offices in this building. I must say they have a pretty flock of girls working for them. The doctors I saw were a rather sophisticated looking lot, I thought. I heard one of them say, quoting, I guess,

"You never meet a pippin on a train!" I hoped, ardently, that he would never meet my Bon Bon on a train!

That afternoon Miss Gunn went to see one of the doctors, professionally, of course. She was gone a long time. I recall I suffered the pangs of jealousy in no small degree that day. I shall long remember the hours I spent in that lobby, waiting for my Bon Bon. A voice, away off somewhere, kept singing, "She's Just What the Doctor Ordered." It made me very nervous.

When she finally came back, I chided her about the doctor, to which chiding, she an-

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swered:

“Why, Dan, he’s as safe with me as though he were in the hoose-gow.”

She said this in her nonchalant way, which was really chummy, but I have often wondered since if she could have been spoofing me.



CHAPTER XI.

A FEW weeks later, when coming home from a mission, on which my darling had sent me, I met, on the dinner, another vice crusader, whom I shall call "Lilla Byrd." We were seated at the same table, quite by accident of course. We were alone. She wanted some sugar, so I gave it to her with a smile, which is my usual way of doing a favor. We then talked of many things. One remark she made struck me as being rather full of gravel. She said she thought Miss Gunn would get further if it were not for the come-hither look in her eyes. (Of course, she did not know about me and Miss Gunn). I recall wondering what the look in this Byrd's eyes meant. But I said nothing. I am an adept in the art of keeping things to myself.

The meal over, she graciously paid my check as well as her own, when she learned that the steward was having trouble in

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changing the one hundred dollar note which I presented. I have often wondered since if she saw my small bills later, when I inadvertently opened my purse in her presence.

We spent the evening on the observation platform, where Lilla Byrd proceeded to "talk an arm off" me. Remembering that she had paid for the dinner, I listened respectfully. It was on this occasion that I first used that well known saying, "God loves you and you can sit on your hands." It was in answer to a rather asinine remark which Miss Byrd made about nobody loving her and her hands being cold. I think I may safely say that I originated that slick "comeback." We were the last ones to go in. I recall Miss Byrd was worried about getting up in time the next morning. I said to her, "I'll awaken and have you called in time. Trust me." I shall never forget how she ogled, as she said, nudging me in the ribs, "Young man, I wouldn't trust you around the corner."

Miss Byrd was really quite smitten with

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me. I recall how she stood watching as I climbed into my upper berth . . . lest I fall and hurt myself. She needn't have worried. Imogene Gunn's "Kiddy" would never fall for her. I was later justified in my decision not to cultivate Lilla Byrd. She went bankrupt in a few weeks.

The next morning I helped Miss Byrd off the train. She got off a station or two before me. It was a rainy, gloomy morning. I shall never forget the hat Miss Byrd wore. It was banked with flowers like a baby's grave. I recall I felt easier after the train had pulled out. The last I ever saw of Miss Byrd was her hat, droopy by that time.

I recall how Lilla Byrd raved over my man form—back there on the observation platform. She said it was, perhaps, the most attractive she had ever seen . . . that is, she thought it would be. She asked me, I recall if I had ever done any posing. I didn't quite get her idea in bringing that up.

Arrived home, I could hardly wait until I could see my darling and spill the beans

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about Miss Byrd. I thought she might enjoy it . . . but somehow, it seemed to make her jealous. I had never seen her that way before. I remember she said, "That woman has the most atrocious taste, Dan."

We went to the theatre that evening. Sophie Tucker, in her best form and most refined and beautiful, was on the bill. I recall thinking how much she looked like my Bon Bon. Miss Gunn told me she had to pay \$7.50 for the tickets. Miss Tucker is most popular. I recall hearing her sing that evening, for the first time, "He Don't Wanna".



CHAPTER XII.

DMISS GUNN was always thoughtful of my entertainment on her speaking tours at such times as I accompanied her to care for the dogs or report her speeches.

I remember in the fore part of January I went to a place I shall call Chicago to handle the above mentioned duties for her there. She was naturally very busy even at such times as my duties were completed and suggested many different modes of entertainment for me. She had a temporary office in one of the largest buildings there and I remember one night in particular when we remained at the office long after hours. Of course, this temporary office afforded none of the usual paraphernalia we had at home, but nevertheless we managed a very satisfactory evening. In fact, in this very office was conceived, we later decided, our

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Gateau Robert.

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“That’s an extremely striking vest you have on, Dan,” she said as I pulled it down. That was the first time she had seen that particular vest which I had bought in a store I shall call Marson McNeary Botts, along with my plaid suspenders which I snapped at intervals, on the potential payment plan of one dollar down and the rest when I sold a poem.

Miss Gunn had very cleverly concealed an alcohol lamp and some dishes in a filing cabinet and served tea and cake that evening as we discussed many matters. In fact, it was this very cake which led to my idea of the recipe for Gateau Robert—a particularly delicious dessert which Miss Gunn afterward took first prize with at the Kansas State Fair.

After reaching home two weeks later and during just such another entertaining evening at the office, one of the first things my dear one did was to try out the Gateau Ro-

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bert recipe, and we found it to be all we had imagined.

Our paraphernalia in the home office was quite complete, however, consisting of a gas plate, a tiny oven, some dishes and a tin cupboard in which we kept provisions so it was always possible to try out any recipe we desired at any time.

Later I remember, Miss Gunn was much concerned about me and gave me some of Doctor Dope's No. 23 Dinner Drops which she said the aviator had often used and found to be effective after some of the dinners she had prepared. I felt certain, however, that they would be ineffective in my case and even went so far as to compose a comic poem at their expense. I remember how she said, all too truly, alas, "You can't keep your cake and eat it too, Dan." How true. I kept it only a short space after eating it.

I remember also how Miss Gunn told me that the aviator had never cared to help her concoct new recipes, although he always

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seemed willing enough to eat the results. "You know," she told me, "my husband went around with a domestic science teacher before he married me and so had already shared the first fine glory of trying out recipes with her."

My darling always belittled the aviator's culinary qualifications, I thought, and seemed rather to picture me as her ideal K. P. This never failed to fill me with gratification.

I told her in mock seriousness at the time we baked the Gateau Robert that I'd have to write a cook book of entirely new recipes for her.

"Very well, Kiddie, but let us see how this cake comes out first," she said, laughing shyly.

CHAPTER XIII.

IN MISS GUNN'S new office, she was never safe from prying eyes. Someone might come bursting in at any time, even though my Bon Bon had a personal representative, whom I shall call Min Jade, who was expected to guard her when the occasion demanded. I well remember one cold, rainy, gloomy day when I came there. My Bon Bon was, as ever, delighted to see me. I know that in all the history of lovely, loving women, there was never one who could tie my Bon Bon. And she has often said to me, reverently, "God made you, Dan, then He destroyed the mold."

She said it to me on this occasion for the severalth time.

Something must have happened to upset my dear Miss Gunn that day, for I recall she said to me, through clinched teeth, "Dan, Kjerie, I hate that word 'concubine.' "

I agreed with her that it did have a sort

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of Spanish twang that savored of indecency and then changed the subject.

It was on this same occasion that I happened to tell my Bon Bon of some things I had heard people back home say of her flirty ways. She answered me, rather cleverly, I thought:

“Well, Dan, none of them is sitting in the chair of the Vice President of the Cause.”

My Bon Bon was an innately modest creature, so, though Min Jade was on guard that evening, when we were ready to go home, we took the precaution to go into a small room off Miss Gunn’s private office. It was there I put on Miss Gunn’s Surgee Splashettes. When I had got them on, I knelt for a moment before my dear one. She was going to a dinner dance that evening and the thought that my darling would dance about in another man’s arms was too much for me. I again suffered the pangs of jealousy. I shall never forget the way my Bon Bon said, in her nonchalant way, which was really chummy, “Yump up, Kjerie, I’ll do the kneeling around this place. I need

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the exercise more than you do." Such was the great modesty of Imogene Gunn, Vice President of the Cause.

It was fortunate that Miss Gunn had her splashettes on when I knelt there, else her silk clad ankles might have been drenched with her Kiddy's tears. The splashettes were new at that time, I recall, being the invention of that brilliant young inventor, whom I shall call Z. Surgee. They were made of oiled silk and worn like high spats. This particular pair was of royal purple.



CHAPTER XIV.

NOW well I remember that morning, several months later. It was cold and stormy . . . early fall with a hint of melancholy in the air. My darling was in a distant city and a great secret experience was taking place. I was terribly worried. My whole future was at stake. I recall noticing, later on that day, that I had bitten off all my finger nails as I paced up and down my room, hoping to God that it would not be a boy, so, if he grew up and adored someone and depended upon her as I adored and depended upon Miss Gunn, he would not have to live through the anguish of such an hour as I was putting in.

Miss Gunn's hopes were for a girl. She wanted someone to carry on her work when she was through. A girl, who would carry the name of Gunn down through Women's Rights history. I wondered if the aviator

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was going to raise the Old Nick. He had made it quite clear to his wife that he did not wish her to bring any children into the world, if she intended they should be called Gunn. He was afraid that naughty little boys might call the child—should it be a boy—Son of a Gunn. As if that made any real difference! Some minds are simply too narrow for any good use. How any man could be so stern with my Bon Bon is beyond my comprehension. And my Bon Bon was adamant in having her children known as Gunns. It looked as though the aviator was up against something.

The telephone rang. It rang again and again before I finally mustered enough strength to pick up the receiver and say, faintly, "Hello."

"A son has been born," said a voice, rather disinterestedly, I thought, "Please cable the Captain."

A son! A son! The wonder of it. Imogene Gunn, Vice President of the Cause, had a son!

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I remember distinctly that I wore a black and mauve dressing gown when the news was telephoned me.

I did not cable the Captain. I decided to wait until Miss Gunn was in a position to do so. Not that I had anything to fear of the Captain . . . he was over the sea . . . but I wasn't quite sure what effect the news would have on him. In fact, not until several years later did the Captain hear that his wife was the mother of little Sonny Gunn. My Bon Bon decided against telling anyone, when again I saw her. As far as the Cause was concerned, she was no better off than before—for no son could carry on her work. So, she thought she'd better keep Sonny's existence a secret from everyone. However, she grew to love the little fellow dearly. He looked like her. I was thankful for that.

I did not see my Bon Bon for several weeks after that. I found it necessary to go to the mountains for a long rest—the anguish of that ordeal having been too much for me. I was so afraid she might leave me!

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After that Miss Gunn usually called me "Dan." I shall never forget the respectful crescendo in which she used to speak my name on certain occasions.



CHAPTER XV.

TY mauve diary was a great comfort to me in the days that followed. Into it I wrote all the love and devotion I had for Miss Imogene Gunn, Vice President of the Cause. Sometimes I wrote 'way into the wee sma' hours. I recall I wore on such occasions my most colorful dressing gown . . . a gorgeous thing of cardinal red. I had bought it with some of the left over expense money that Miss Gunn had given me before going to the distant city for her secret experience.

I usually wrote in a low chair before some French windows. For then I could look as often as I liked at the cardinal-red clothed image that gazed out at me from the panes. It was a great secret that Miss Gunn had imposed upon us . . . me and my shadow, and the smile that passed between us was sometimes a sad one. For how did we

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know just how it would all end? If you have never been in love with a vice crusader . . . the Vice President of a Cause, you could, perhaps, gentle reader, never understand my feelings at this time.

I recall I put into this diary of mine some of my very best literary efforts, both in the line of poetry and otherwise. Ah, it was drama, first handed, that went between the mauve covers of that book . . . aye, melodrama.

Later, when I told my darling about the diary she showed undue perturbation, I thought. She insisted that I destroy the book. She even asked me to bring it to her, so she could destroy it with her own hands. However, I assured her that I could handle that small matter to her satisfaction and she felt easier.

I hated to destroy the diary. I had paid \$8.75 for it—it was marked down—and it exactly matched one of my favorite dressing gowns.

CHAPTER XVI.

STime went on I began to wish for something tangible to speak of the great admiration and reverence in which I held my Bon Bon, Miss Imogene Gunn, Vice President of the Cause. So—one day I bought me a slave bracelet, such as Rudolph Valentino wore to his death. Whenever Miss Gunn went on speaking tours, she always brought forth from her dear old portfolio, enough money to take care of Sonny and me while she was gone. Sonny stayed at my brother Constant's home most of the time. Sometimes it was necessary for me to get a few days off to be with him and on such occasions I found it rather hard to account to my employer for my absence. Usually, I simply said, laughing merrily:

“As my old friend, the novelist, would say, ‘I’m going to Milwaukee to see a man about a dog . . . that’s my story and I’ll

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stick to it.’’ At times it did not go over so well, but I did not give a high-o-the-merrio. I knew I would be provided for did I lose my job.

It was on the occasion of her going on a protracted tour that my dearest gave me most freely of money for expenses. There was so much that I felt justified in buying myself a platinum bracelet. When she came home I showed her the circlet. She smiled indulgently and placed it on my trembling wrist.

We made quite a ceremony of it all, I remember.

That night, I recall distinctly, we heard a new song. It went something like this,

“Absolutely, Positively, and How!”

I liked that song.

CHAPTER XVII.

MISS Bon Bon had a certain subtle sense of humor all her own. I recall once when she stopped in with me at the office where I then worked. (After Sonny was born, we had decided that it might look more conventional—the Captain still being an aviator—if I worked elsewhere. So, I had gone to work for Johan Johansen, the great Herring and Tripe king.) Miss Gunn and I had had our lunch at the Automat—and as I said before, we dropped in at the office where I then worked. I introduced Miss Gunn to my day time employer (for though I worked for Mr. Johansen during the day, I still did many things for Miss Gunn for which she paid me well) and I remember hearing her say, laughing merrily:

“Well, we with great understandings must stick together, must we not?” and

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they went into deep political discussions which I did not understand in the least.

I could not swear, to this day, that Mr. Johansen is Scandinavian. And as for my Bon Bon's feet, I have always thought them beautiful and not so terribly large, considering her size otherwise.

I remember when my darling had gone that day, she had won the discussion, whatever it was. She always did win discussions, when they were with men. With women she seemed not to get so far. Miss Gunn was too kind and trusting as far as her friends were concerned and they often betrayed her, that is the women did. They would accept her favors and turn right around and call her a flirt and say cruel unkind things about her and vote for the other candidate when it came time to elect someone to represent the cause. At the time when they did vote her in as Vice President of the Cause, it was simply to gain their own ends.

CHAPTER XVIII

TIME flitted, as Time has a sad way of doing, and one day when Sonny was about three years old, we were out in my brother Constant's vineyard . . . Miss Gunn being away on Cause business and the Captain still being an aviator. I had been wondering what the dear little chap would turn into when he grew up . . . wondering if he would become a great orator—(I was quite sure he would not be interested in aviation), when the darling child began to recite lines, which I knew must be of his own creation. This is what he was saying, in a manner so like my Bon Bon's:

“Oh, the bumblebee’s a funny thing,
When it says ‘hello,’ how it do sting!”

I was glad, afterward, to know that there had been no one about to witness my rap-

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ture on this occasion. I am not sure, but it would seem I did the Spring Dance, with Cleopatra and Mark Antony at my heels. At least Sonny often did the dance after that, to the great delight of his "Uncle Dan," as he called me, for the want of a better name. My heart sang within me. Here was a poet who would have an income and could write poetry to his heart's content, without having to worry about making a livelihood. I wondered if the aviator would raise the Old Nick when he finally did find out about the boy and learned he was destined to be a poet.

I wrote for a long time that evening in my mauve diary.

CHAPTER XIX.

I WELL remember my first visit to a city I shall call New York where Miss Gunn now had permanent offices due to her installation as Vice-President of the Vice Crusade.

Of course, I "lamped" everything I could as I went along, Min Jade escorting me inside, at which time I borrowed forty dollars from her.

I remember well the suit I wore upon that occasion. It was a striking thing of good sized black and white checks. With it I wore light tan shoes, striped mauve socks, a lipstick red tie and a natty bottle green English hunting hat with the regulation bit of feather upon the side.

The most interesting thing I observed was the collapsible day bed in Miss Gunn's private office. It had so deteriorated that Miss Gunn remarked it might have been

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used by Noah in the Ark. We used to be there a great deal of the time, particularly the instances when Min Jade waited for me outside—presumably expecting to collect some of the loans she had made me.

We had corned beef and cabbage for dinner that night. Curious how much I always ate when I was with Miss Gunn. She always insisted upon paying, of course, but that I think I may safely say, had nothing to do with the quantity I “put away.” I often told Miss Gunn that when it came to eating, I was not her friend, but just a great big he-man, meat-eating brute.



CHAPTER XX.

IDON'T rightly remember when the precocious plan of marriage to a wealthy woman entered my mind. I only know that it came to full-blown perfection after my adored one's disappearance. I saw it then as the easy way out. Marriage would make my adoption of Sonny possible — giving him a mother who could own him, my name and sufficient money to later pursue a correspondence course in poetry and short story writing. I could then tell the woman I had married that I would never love her aside from the fact that she "brought home the bacon" for little Sonny. I did not dare to think of the tremendous sacrifice to my self-confidence and creative powers such a course would mean.

Thereupon and without delay I began giving the women I met "the once-over."

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I considered several women as foster mothers for little Sonny, but they all fell short somewhere. I even told Imogene what I considered doing, but knowing how badly the whole thing made her feel, I gave up the idea for the time being. And anyhow I hadn't been able to find anybody who filled my idea of a foster mother for little Sonny, since unlimited money would be required in the pursuit of his education under my tutelage.



CHAPTER XXI.

ONE Sunday afternoon I took Sonny Boy out for a long walk. We were most joyful and our hearts were brimming over with love for every living thing. I recall we strolled down the railroad track, throwing stones at birds. We reached a long trestle and started to cross it. When we were about half way over, a train came whizzing toward us. I grabbed Sonny and hung over the side. I was loosing my hold, and being fearful of falling, I let Sonny Boy drop, so I could hold on better. I remember thinking it would be too bad for Miss Gunn to lose us both at once. When the train had whizzed by I drew myself back to safety and when I had recovered my nerve enough to not get dizzy by looking down, I peered over the edge to see what had become of Miss Gunn's little boy. There he hung on a spike. I sat for



There he hung on a spike

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some time, getting my breath and wondering what to do. At last I walked back to the village and got the Hook and Ladder company to come out and get Sonny off the spike.

His picture appeared in the newspapers the next day. How adorable he looked, hanging there on a spike and laughing! The headlines were in rather a jocular vein, for example, one of them said,

“Why The Little Sonsa Gunn.”

When next I saw my darling, I showed her the picture. She was unbelievably cross with me.

“Vy, Dan, vhere vere your vits?” she asked me heatedly.

I have since thought it might have been the headline that disturbed her so. On the other hand she may have thought me rather careless with Sonny . . . taking him out on the trestle. But—horse-radish! I went, too. She soon got over her peeve, however. She liked my new palm beach suit and panama hat.

CHAPTER XXII

WHEN, suddenly, all out of a clear sky, Miss Gunn felt the call to go to Yucatan. She felt she should introduce the Cause among the benighted artists, who they say infest the place.

Why she chose Yucatan, I do not recall. Perhaps it was because she seemed to like, always, the flavor of a gum of that name.

I recall I brought many sobs with me in those days, when I went to see my Bon Bon. I tried hard to comprehend, when she explained, oh so patiently, that if one gives oneself to a Cause, one must see it through, regardless of personal feelings. There was need of her, she said, down there among the artists. I couldn't quite understand how they could need her more than I. I felt, of course, that I should be more important to her than all the artists in Yucatan put to-

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gether. To say nothing of little Sonny.

However, I am quite sure that in her heart, Miss Gunn had room for nothing but me, even though certain enemies of mine have intimated that Miss Gunn's reason for going to that far away land might have been to get away from me and the cares I imposed upon her.

This thought of having her go away preyed heavily on my mind night and day for many weeks. I hoped she would change her mind. But it became quite evident that she was really going. She intended to leave little Sonny in my care, the Captain still being an aviator. I then became panic stricken. I knew what a hazardous adventure that would be . . . and suppose she wouldn't come back? What of me then . . . and Sonny? How could he write poetry and maintain his position in the world as the son of a celebrity if he had no steady income? Of course, my brother Constant would care for Sonny until he grew up . . . but what of me?

CHAPTER XXIII

SO, one day I went in desperation to a woman who knew the ins and outs of the motion picture game. I asked her about getting a job for Sonny. She told me she'd rather see a son of hers selling space in a Chicago flop-house than posing before a camera all day long. She did, however, offer to do something for me. I thought some of taking her up . . . but I learned in time that what she wanted me to do was to double for Ben Turpin. Strange what a queer concept some people have of other people's talent. I am sure my face and incomparable man form (as it has often been described by Miss Gunn and other vice crusaders), were worthy of something better than that, although I have heard that Ben Turpin does command a fairly decent salary.

My Bon Bon, however, would hear of

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neither Sonny nor me appearing on the silver-sheet. She promised to take care of us—but she didn't. I must say it was rather careless of her not to make sure of our comfort for the future. But I am sure she did not intend to leave us destitute. She loved me too much for that. I recall questioning Min Jade closely about anything that might have been left in her care. Min said she knew nothing about anything of the sort and that no money had been left in her care. I must admit that there have been times, in the dark days that I have lived through, when I have questioned Min's veracity.



CHAPTER XXIV.

AS long as there is a shred of her empty old portfolio left, I shall remember the last visit I ever made to the offices of Imogene Gunn, Vice President of the Vice Crusade, before she left for Yucatan and points south.

Nothing was as I had expected, and my reaction to conditions as they existed was such as I had never shown on previous trips to Miss Gunn's office. New window panes and paper weights were furnished the next day, however, so no really irreparable damage was done.

And I had purchased for the occasion of my visit there a new dressing gown, too. It was an amazing thing of topaz and violet satin and styled to show to advantage my perfect man form, I thought. I paid \$95.00 for it. I had also bought for the trip a new

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herring bone suit for which I paid \$185.00, a derby for which I paid \$20.00, a dozen especially monogrammed handkerchieves for which I paid \$15.00, and a fresh supply of my favorite brand of scent, for which I paid \$25.00. I also wore a beautiful, silky raccoon coat which was very dear to me due to the manner in which I had obtained same.

Miss Gunn helped me off with the coat and remarked as usual, "That getup's a darb, Dan." Then she looked at me and said almost coyly with the expression which I always knew meant a snappy session, "You handsome pup." But I did not feel in a doggy mood now that I understood conditions better.

We rested first on the collapsible day bed in her private office. I had brought with me to show Miss Gunn, a quaint little cuckoo clock which I had bought myself for Christmas in company with some stuffed dates and many jumping jacks I had bought for Sonny Boy.

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“Vat you got there, Kiddie?” she said, looking down at the cuckoo clock after admiring the “yumping yaks” as she called them. I then opened the package containing the clock and the unrecognizable specie of bird inside came out and said, “Cuckoo, cuckoo.” Miss Gunn giggled and took the clock away from me. “Sh, Kiddie, shut it off,” she said, “someone might believe it.”

I suggested that we go into the filing cabinet alcove. There Miss Gunn sat on a filing stool and I studied her more closely. “Why, Miss Gunn, what a case of hives you have,” I said. Indeed, she was quite swollen from them. “Take it from me,” I told her, “if I were your secretary, I’d see to it that you were cured of those.”

“How is the aviator, anway?” I then queried uninterestedly.

Though he flew a continent or two away, with the height of his stunts, as Miss Gunn said, the subject of general conversation, whether he landed in a parachute or a pear tree made no difference to me. My own

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landings were more than I could handle.

"His disposition is the same," replied Miss Gunn.

"Goodness," I said, "I do hope he's ordered to Zanzibar for the remaining fifteen years of his active service." Miss Gunn giggled and tapped me playfully on the cheek. A trifle wistfully, too, I thought.

I then told Miss Gunn plainly that things were not going well, and that the fact that Sonny used terrible language continually showed he needed a mother's hand upon him, all of which worried me extremely. She protested, however, that she was even more worried than I, which was, of course, quite absurd.

"You must remember, Kiddie," she said, "aviation is a dangerous branch of the service, and it is very probable that the man will do a nose dive before I do. At that time I can own Sonny without the fear of anyone objecting to his use of my own name." There was a fanatical light in her eye. She was a true Lucy Stoner.

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That was always a far fetched idea of the aviator's anyhow, I thought—objecting simply because of the soubriquet the boys at school might hurl at the child, viz., "Little Son of a Gunn."

"My dear, why do you have that doctor, anyhow?" I asked as she leaned over to scratch her hives.

"You'd nurse me well, wouldn't you, Dan?" she queried coming closer and pursing her mouth in that certain way she used when something very sweet was about to happen. It seemed to give her the fullest enjoyment of the occasion. I tried it and likewise found it most wonderful, giving even greater sweetness to the moment than I had anticipated. In fact, I have ever since continued to eat stuffed dates with my mouth in that identical way.

We went back to the collapsible daybed. Something within me revolted. Perhaps it was the luncheon of calves liver and bacon I had just eaten.

"There have been women born who would have been proud to be seen with

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me," I trumpeted, standing straight with my chest thrown out. A crumby thing to say! Considering even the few things she had done for me.

We went back to the daybed.

I told Miss Gunn about my desire to quit addressing envelopes and take a correspondence course in scenario writing instead.

"Duckie," she said quickly—too quickly I thought.

Curious that there should have been bologna for dinner that night and raspberries for breakfast the following morning.

To add further to the situation, I got caught in the folding bed that night and stood on my head till morning.

CHAPTER XXV.

WELL, my Bon Bon really went to Yucatan, leaving Sonny Boy in my care. When she had gone, I, wishing to get away for a while, away from my worries and cares, and having, perhaps, a subconscious hope of finding a wife with enough kale to take care of both Sonny and me, should my Bon Bon not return, made plans for a trip to Greenland.

Before going, I took my dear old Grandmother Sytton over to call on Miss Gunn's mother. Now that Miss Gunn was Vice President of the Cause, they did not allow her mother to smoke except in the confines of her own room. I coaxed Grandma to leave her clay pipe at home, too, and we set out, with some of my mother's corn concoctions under my arm.

The dear old ladies had a delightful time, talking over the old days and drinking the concoction instead of tea. I have never be-

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fore seen the dear things as happy as they were on that occasion.

Greenland was a delightful country, full of marriageable flappers with wealthy trap-pers for fathers. I tried hard to get Miss Gunn and my problem out of my mind. I recall I had borrowed a hundred dollars from a friend before leaving the States, with which I purchased a beautiful fur costume to wear to the Igloo Ball which was to be given shortly after my arrival. I was quite thrilled at the thought of the svelt Eskimiddies who would swirl about in my arms at this ball.

I was quite a sensation, I recall. The costume set off my masculine good points very well. There was one Eskimiddy, whom I shall call, for certain reasons, Paloma. She really fell in love with me at first sight. She begged me to marry her. At first I thought I might. I am quite sure I could have foisted Sonny on her without any trouble, but she seemed so in dead earnest that I really hadn't the heart to do such a thing as marry

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her for her money. So, I acted indifferent.

When the ball was at its height, the wolves began to howl about the great igloo, the dogs howled, and I must confess, I felt like howling too, when they served blubber and Eskimo pie for refreshments. I think all that howling was a sort of presentiment of what was to be. For in a moment I heard, coming over the radio, the tale of a red-headed woman who had been found wandering among the sands down in Mexico. I straightway decided Miss Gunn must have gone to Mexico instead of Yucatan. I was furious to think that she would double cross me that way.

All I could think of was to get back to the States as quickly as possible. I borrowed a hundred dollars from Paloma and she took me on her little sled to the nearest Trading Post. From there I wired a Scotch lady friend to have five hundred dollars waiting for me. I was most grateful to find the money there when I got back. I was also quite surprised. I remember thinking to myself that I might go a long way before

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I'd find another Scotch woman like my friend, Mrs. Mackintosh.

It wasn't Miss Gunn, after all, who wandered among the sands. It was either a ballyhoer or an evangelist, I forget which, who had been kidnapped, so the story goes, and taken into Mexico.

At this time I set seriously about trying to solve my problem and that of Sonny Boy's.



CHAPTER XXVI.

THE first of April, my friend, Lulu MacIntosh, sought my counsel in the matter of investing \$50.27 in a Hawaiian pineapple canning project which made it essential for her to go to Honolulu. I thought this a very "fly-by-night" proposition and "made no bones" about telling her so, after which she, of course, went and invested in the said project.

She then, it being leap year, asked me a certain question I had grown very used to hearing. "Would I," she asked, "put my shoes in her trunk?" which question I had never failed to answer negatively heretofore due to the fact that I had but one pair which was half-soled and continually in use.

"Would I," she insisted, "accompany her to Honolulu on a wedding trip?" I said

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“No” quite tartly. In the first place, I had always looked forward to going to Niagara Falls for my wedding trip, and in the second place I was a strong believer in the foreign dot system and my prospective wife would be required to lay down a cool \$5,000.00 before me 'ere I married her. Lulu offered me her checkbook then and there, which so surprised me that I felt ashamed I had mentioned such a thing inasmuch as I did not feel that I could explain about needing the money for Sonny's training for a poetical career. I did not learn until much later that she had the day before changed her account to another bank than the one for which she offered the check book.

I did manage to borrow \$80.00 of her, however, and she left shortly thereafter.

She returned just before Thanksgiving so I borrowed \$80.00 more of her and gave due thanks. In the interim I had sought advice of my friend, Abe Finkelstein. He agreed that the thing to do was to marry Lulu, and thus be able to give Sonny such

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a background as even Bobbie Burns may not have known. The fact that Lulu was decidedly rawboned should not, he said, cause me to hesitate about doing the thing which would give Sonny the background. My friend and I also agreed that while the old saying, "you can't get blood out of a turnip" is generally true, still my persuasive powers might work wonders where money was concerned.

She loved me madly, of course, and would sit all night listening to me talk, never attempting to become coy as most women would have after a certain hour. I appreciated this and told my friend that in return for furnishing Sonny the background I would attempt to make her as happy as most wives—which was not promising much anyhow—and I was quite sure that I could become used to her bones in time. I always could become used to almost anything excepting the lack of a banking account.

Upon Lulu's return from Honolulu, I made up my mind to tell her about Sonny,

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but I waited until the first of April rolled around again to make a fool of myself. Then I disclosed all to her and said that if Sonny could not live with us and be treated as one of the family, then I would not marry her. I told her such part of the entire truth as seemed best and gave her a bird's eye view of things as they stood. She still seemed to want to marry me. She always spoke of large sums of money carelessly so I knew she couldn't be "spoofing" me in regard to the money she had. She must have known by this time of my penchant for spending money for small necessities such as dressing gowns, scent, etc., and that while I had never really had much more than these hereinbefore mentioned absolute necessities of life, these I must have in some slight degree.

After that night, she didn't call me for a couple of months and I decided impulsively that she really must be deciding to avoid me. She may, I thought, have decided that I was marrying her with "something up my sleeve," although on the other hand I could

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not dovetail this idea with her many times repeated proposal couched in her own peculiarly chosen words, i. e., "two can live as cheaply as one."

But it turned out that her little silence meant nothing more than maidenly modesty. She 'phoned me two months from the night I confessed everything to her and asked me to accompany her to a free lecture given for the benefit of mankind by the Neo-Parenthetic Society of the League for Silkless Corn.

She again brought up the matter of two being able to live as cheaply as one, which didn't interest me much, as I was trying to figure out some way of living myself and anyhow it wasn't a matter of two living as cheaply as one, but three.

Then she said if I continued refusing to marry her, that she would make a will and leave everything to Agriculture Research for the purpose of converting wild oats into a super-satisfying breakfast food.

She said the above as we sped along (on foot) beneath the telephone wires that

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arched the street. I told her jokingly that I'd have to hunt myself up another slave bracelet the next day and at this she brightened up and gave me one of her grim smiles.

The first thing I did the next day was to pick out what I wanted in the way of a slave bracelet, which I had decided had best be an expensive wrist watch. I was beginning to grow canny myself considering my life's ups and downs, and a wrist watch can almost always be converted into ready cash—while a regular slave bracelet might be harder to get rid of.

Lulu finally met me and said she had not been able to collect any money that morning, having lent all her ready cash to different Scotch friends of her's. She certainly gave me the impression of being big hearted, but I felt despondent and very much put out that she should behave so; first to convey the impression that I could have the sole use of her money and then to go and lend it to someone else without keeping even enough to buy me a slave bracelet!

CHAPTER XXVII.

I DIDN'T sleep much that night for thinking of Lulu's money being used by someone else, and the next morning I called her and told her we had best be married at once. She was late reaching the City Hall as she said she'd been busy fitting a dress and couldn't get away any sooner.

We finally got the license and when the man asked what Lulu's business was I said, "modiste," but she looked dazed and said, "dressmaker would come nearer the truth." I didn't know that this meant any difference in the amount of money she made, so I was happy for a while longer.

Having secured the license, we had our luncheon at a hot dog stand.

We were married early the next morning, me in a pin stripe navy blue and Lulu in a little brown dress with a kale.

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It was almost more than I could bear to grant to Lulu the great happiness which had been so completely and so wholly that of Miss Gunn, but I did manage to cram back my distaste and put my hand into Lulu's purse occasionally. You see, it had meant great happiness to Miss Gunn to know that I never wanted for anything material and I hesitated as I say, to grant to anyone else that peculiar happiness. I appreciated it very much, you may be sure, when Lulu left me alone with the purse for half an hour or so. It gave me an opportunity to secure the needed funds without embarrassing her.

The next morning I returned to work addressing envelopes as the boss had not yet gotten anyone fully competent and capable of filling the position. Besides Lulu was figuring on going to Scotland to get some money. She also said she'd start the wheels turning toward the sale of an oatmeal factory there in which she owned a share.

We hadn't been married more than a couple of days when I discovered upon

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looking into Lulu's purse casually that all of her money had disappeared and she didn't have even enough to pay our expenses at the rooming house that day. She told me though that the next dress she made would net her a profit of about \$10.25. She must have forgotten herself, however, and put some money back into her purse, too, for with it and the \$15.00 I made that week for addressing envelopes, I bought myself the long coveted wrist watch at Abe Finkelstein's shop.

Lulu sewed away from the room a great deal the next week so her raw boned appearance did not bother me so much. I had stopped addressing envelopes and was just staying around the rooming house when a friend of mine came into the city. When I learned he was coming, I counted up my money and borrowed \$25.00 of Abe, leaving my wrist watch with him for the time being. With some of this, I bought a new collar, some scent, a pair of mauve spats and a cane. I wore also a coon skin cap which was made out of all that was left of

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the once beautiful raccoon coat Miss Gunn had made it possible for me to buy.

I then gave a small luncheon party for my friend at Thompson's. I felt quite dignified—a married man and entertaining on my own money.

As soon as Lulu came, I asked her what success she had. She said the dress failed to fit and that no money had come from Scotland. She was worried and so was I. So she went to Scotland herself. While she was gone, I decided to go to Medicine Hat to visit my father and asked my brother to take Sonny there. This he did, notwithstanding the fact that there was a great deal of work to be done in the vineyards.

By this time I felt soul sick. I felt that "something had been put over on me" all around. All I had was an oatmeal taste in my mouth, although I did not at that time suspect Lulu of having taken to keeping her money elsewhere than in the purse I had been led to believe she always used. She had loved me so truly.

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I discovered later, however, that nothing was to be gained in that direction and so secured a divorce. I only wished it might have been possible for me to get alimony as well, for Lulu certainly misrepresented herself to me. A song has since been popular on victrolas and radios—entitled “Don’t Bring Lulu,” and I always heartily applaud it.



CHAPTER XXVIII.

AFTER Miss Gunn had been gone for several months and had not been heard from for some time, I began to despair of her ever returning. Things looked rather black for me. I had been unable to get any alimony when I divorced Mrs. Mackintosh (I don't believe I ever thought of or referred to the woman as "Mrs. Sytton"), and so I had to go back to envelope addressing. I was making only \$15.00 a week and there was, of course, no more money left in my sock. Sonny needed many things and I wanted him with me all the time. I knew full well that there was no one who could so well guide him in the ways of writing poetry as I. It was cruel to be so young . . . and broke!

Another thing that worried me was Min Jades continual hounding me to make good the check of \$1.50, which I had given her

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and which the bank had returned to her. I thought it quite unkind of Min Jade to hound me so. Somehow, she had gathered together plenty of money while in the employ of my Bon Bon. She had a yacht, a cottage at the lake, a big stock farm and several fur coats, to say nothing of diamonds galore. I have often wondered how she bought them all on her salary. She always gave me the same answer when I asked about money for Sonny.

I shall never forget that day when I found Miss Gunn's portfolio. I had gone to the old place to look it over. I thought I might find something there which Min Jade had overlooked . . . something that would help Sonny and me. The house was deserted, of course, and locked up, awaiting the return of the aviator, it now being an accepted fact that Miss Gunn would never come back. I crawled in through a window.

There, flung by careless hands onto a table, was the well beloved portfolio. It was open and empty. As I looked at it, it seemed to be grinning fatuously at me. It seemed

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almost to yell, "Never more shall money be taken from me to be given to you by the tender hands of Imogene Gunn."

I grabbed it and started to throw it into the fireplace, but on second thought I kept it. It would serve as an emblem and a warning not to get into a trap like this again . . . for I did feel cornered.

I was no better off than before the visit. About this time I thought of one of Miss Gunns very good friends. I shall call her Helen Maria. I felt quite sure that she would come to Sonny's and my aid. I sent her a letter but received no response, which I thought rather strange. I later learned from Min Jade, who had been at Helen Maria's home when the letter came, that she had tossed it carelessly into the waste paper basket. I remember Min Jade saying, "Helen Maria's too smart to get mixed up in our imbroglio, Dan." I thought that quite unnecessary of Min Jade and I am quite sure my predicament could not be called an imbroglio.

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I thought some of writing the aviator, this being Min Jade's suggestion every time I tried to get some money from her. But I hesitated. It was some time before I did so. He knew nothing of Sonny's existence and I did not know how far he could be trifled with, if one could call it that. At last I wrote him, with the help of my attorney. I beseeched the Captain to send aid for Imogene's son. The letter which I received in reply showed all too plainly how little one may expect from the husband of the woman one loves.

Curious, he was so intolerant. He called me a blackmailer, said I was defiling the memory of Miss Gunn. Strangely, he cared to have nothing to do with little Sonny . . . doubted the child was Miss Gunn's and denied us point blank, the comfort that my Bon Bon had given so freely. He also called me a male gold-digger and threatened harm to me, should I "sell out to the opposition," whatever he meant by that. I could plainly see there would be no help from that source.

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All the Gunns refused aid to us, though they did admit the child might be hers. But they hung onto their money. In fact they also brought up such epithets as, "gold-digger," "blackmailer" and "belittler of a sacred memory." How they could say those things of me, is beyond my comprehension. Why I have always adored Imogene Gunn.

But simply because Miss Gunn had not seen fit to proclaim to the world that she had a son, why should I do without the luxuries of life?

The empty portfolio, the empty portfolio! Those words kept ringing in my ears like a dirge. How happy I had been while it was full—and things might have been different, too. Miss Gunn had often talked to me of her early affairs. She seemed to have it in for one of the men . . . Percy Burr, of whom I have spoken before. He was a great talker and we used, sometimes, to call him "The Town Crier."

"Why, he's nothing but an out and out ninny," said Miss Gunn of him on one occasion.

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"His little grandson knows more than he."

How I loved to hear her belittling the men who had loved her. I am sure none of them were ever loved by my Bon Bon as was I. I had a great influence over her. I am sure had I cared to do such a thing, I could have induced her to leave the Captain. But I am the soul of honor. I did not care to have such a load on my conscience, even though had I done so, I would not have found myself in such a pickle as this . . . for then, the old portfolio could not have gone dry, legally, for Sonny and me.

And so—with Imogene Gunn lost forever, somewhere in Yucatan, the dear old portfolio empty and Sonny Boy in need of a steady income so that he may grow up to become a poet, it has come to this, I must tell my story . . . and through its telling I may yet get the things I became accustomed to while my Bon Bon was here.

As for the memory of Miss Gunn, I am sure what I have to say won't hurt it any. She was a wonderful woman and other

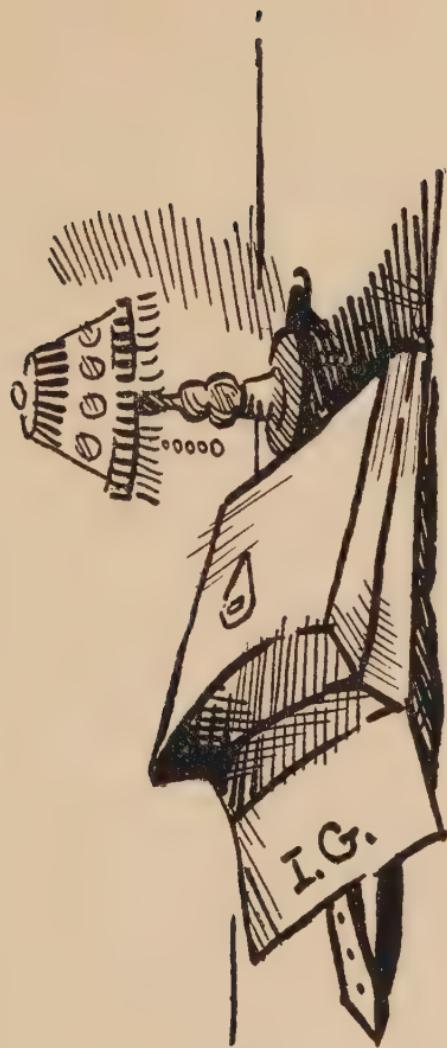
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wonderful women have been unconventional and have got away with it. Pharoah's daughter, for instance. She found Moses in the bulrushes, which was most unconventional. Hers was a good story and she got away with it. They even put it in the Bible! I am sure the tale of the beautiful relations between Miss Gunn and me could never hurt anyone but old maids and male virgins who have no understanding of life in general.

In conclusion, I beg of each one of you who reads this story to write his congressman at once, asking him to pass a law, such as will enable Sonny Boy to be recognized as the son of Imogene Gunn, Vice President of the Cause, and to collect what money is our rightful expectation.

And may God bless you all and keep you . . . from the paths which I have trod!

THE END.



The Empty Portfolio.

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